

TARZAN AND THE BLACK BOY *Being the Fifth of the Series of the Jungle Tales of Tarzan* By Edgar Rice Burroughs

Tarzan and the Black Boy
TARZAN of the Apes sat at the foot of a great tree braiding a new grass rope. Beside him lay the frayed remnants of the old one, torn and severed by the fangs and talons of Sheeta, the panther. Only half the original rope was there, the balance having been carried off by the angry cat as he bounded away through the jungle with the noose still about his savage neck and the loose end dragging among the underbrush.

Tarzan smiled as he recalled Sheeta's great rage, his frantic efforts to free himself from the entangling strands, his uncanny screams that were part hate, part anger, part terror. He smiled in retrospect at the discomfiture of his enemy, and in anticipation of another day as he added an extra strand to his new rope.

This would be the strongest, the heaviest rope that Tarzan of the Apes ever had fashioned. Visions of Numa the lion, straining futilely in his embrace thrilled the ape-man. He was quite content, for his hands and his brain were busy. Content, too, were his fellows of the tribe of Kerchak, searching for food in the clearing and the surrounding trees about him.

As Tarzan worked, Gazan, Teeka's little balu, played about while Teeka sought food upon the opposite side of the clearing. No more did Teeka, the mother, or Taug, the sullen squire, harbor suspicion of Tarzan's intentions toward their first-born. Had he not courted death to save their Gazan from the fangs and talons of Sheeta? Did he not fondle and cuddle the little one with even as great a show of affection as Teeka herself displayed? Their fears were allayed and Tarzan now found himself often in the role of nursemaid to a tiny anthropoid—an avocation which he found by no means irksome, since Gazan was a never-failing fount of surprises and entertainment.

Now he discovered the tail of the rope upon which Tarzan was working. Grasping it in one small hand he bounced away, for all the world like an animated rubber ball, snatching it from the ape-man's hand and running off across the clearing. Tarzan leaped to his feet and was in pursuit in an instant, no trace of anger on his face or in his voice as he called to the roguish little balu to drop his rope.

Straight toward his mother raced Gazan, and after him came Tarzan. Teeka looked up from her feeding, and in the first instant that she realized that Gazan was fleeing and that another was in pursuit, she bared her fangs and bristled; but when she saw that the pursuer was Tarzan she turned back to the business that had been occupying her attention. At her very feet the ape-man overhauled the balu and, though the youngster squealed and fought when Tarzan seized him, Teeka only glanced casually in their direction. No longer did she fear harm to her first-born at the hands of the ape-man. Had he not saved Gazan on two occasions?

Rescuing his rope, Tarzan returned to his tree and resumed his labor; but thereafter it was necessary to watch carefully the playful balu, who was now possessed to steal it whenever he thought his great, smooth-skinned cousin was momentarily off his guard.

But even under this handicap, Tarzan finally completed the rope, a long, pliant weapon, stronger than any he ever had made before. The discarded piece of his former one he gave to Gazan for a plaything, for Tarzan had it in his mind to instruct Teeka's balu after ideas of his own when the youngster should be old and strong enough to profit by his precepts. At present the little apes' innate aptitude for mimicry would be sufficient to familiarize him with Tarzan's ways and weapons, and so the ape-man swung off into the jungle, his new rope coiled over one shoulder, while little Gazan hopped about the clearing dragging the old one after him in childish glee.

As Tarzan traveled, dividing his quest for food with one for a sufficiently noble quarry whereupon to test his new weapon, his mind often was upon Gazan. The ape-man had realized a deep affection for Teeka's balu almost from the first, partly because the child belonged to Teeka, his first love, and partly for the little ape's own sake, and Tarzan's human longing for some sentient creature upon which to expend those natural affections of the soul which are inherent to all normal members of the genus homo. Tarzan envied Teeka. It was true that Gazan evidenced a considerable reciprocity of Tarzan's fondness for him, even preferring him to his own squirely sire; but to Teeka the little one turned when in pain or terror, when tired or hungry. Then it was that Tarzan felt quite alone in the world and longed desperately for one who should turn first to him for succor and protection.

Taug had Teeka; Teeka had Gazan, and nearly every other bull and cow of the tribe of Kerchak had one or more to love and by whom to be loved. Of course, Tarzan could scarcely formulate the thoughts in precisely this way—he only knew that he craved something which seemed to be represented by those relations which existed between Teeka and her balu, and so he envied Teeka and longed for a balu of his own.

He saw Sheeta and his mate with their little family of three; and deeper inland toward the rocky hills, where one might lie up during the

heat of the day, in the dense shade of a tangled thicket close under the cool face of an overhanging rock. Tarzan had found the lair of Numa, the lion, and of Sabor, the lioness. Here he had watched them with their little balus—playful creatures, spotted leopard-like. And he had seen the young fawn with Bara, the deer, and with Buto, the rhinoceros, its ungainly little one. Each of the creatures of the jungle had its own—except Tarzan. It made the ape-man sad to think upon this thing, sad and lonely; but presently the scent of game cleared his young mind of all other considerations, as catlike he crawled far out upon a bending limb above the game trail which led down to the ancient watering place of the wild things of this wild world.

How many thousands of times had this great, old limb bent to the savage form of some bloodthirsty hunter in the long years that it had spread its leafy branches above the deep-worn jungle path! Tarzan, the ape-man; Sheeta, the Panther, and Hista, the snake, it knew well. They had worn smooth the bark upon its upper surface.

Today it was Horta, the boar, which came down toward the watcher in the old tree—Horta, the diabolical temper preserved him from all but the most ferocious or most furnished of the larger carnivora.

So today, instead of staying his hand until a less formidable beast found its way toward him, Tarzan dropped his new rope about the neck of Horta, the boar. It was an excellent test for the untied strands. The angered boar bolted this way and that; but each time the new rope held him where Tarzan had made it fast about the stem of the tree above the branch from which he had cast it.

As Horta grunted and charged, slashing the sturdy jungle patriarch with his mighty tusks until the bark flex in every direction, Tarzan dropped to the ground behind him. In the ape-man's hand was the long, keen blade that had been his constant companion since that distant day upon which chance had directed its point into the body of Horgani, the gorilla, and saved the torn and bleeding man-child from what else had been certain death.

Tarzan walked in toward Horta, who swung now to face his enemy. Mighty and muscled as was the young giant, it yet would have appeared but the maddest folly for him to face so formidable a creature as Horta, the boar, armed only with a slender hunting knife. So it would have seemed to one who knew Horta even slightly and Tarzan not at all.

For a moment Horta stood motionless facing the ape-man. His wicked, deep-set eyes flashed angrily. He shook his lowered head. "Mud-eater!" jeered the ape-man, "wallower in filth. Even your meat stinks, but it is juicy and makes Tarzan strong. Today I shall eat your heart, O Lord of the Great Tusks, that it shall keep savage that which pounds against my own ribs."

Horta, understanding nothing of what Tarzan said, was none the less enraged because of that. He saw only a naked man-child, hairless and futile, pitting his puny fangs and soft muscles against his own indomitable savagery, and he charged. Tarzan of the Apes waited until the upcut of a wicked tusk would have laid upon his thigh, then he moved—just the least bit to one side; but so quickly that lightning was a sluggish by comparison, and as he moved, he stooped low and with all the great power of his right arm drove the long blade of his father's hunting knife straight into the heart of Horta, the boar. A quick leap carried him from the zone of the creature's death throes, and a moment later the hot and dripping heart of Horta was in his grasp.

His hunger satisfied, Tarzan did not seek a lying-up place for sleep, as was sometimes his way, but continued on through the jungle more in search of adventure than of food, for today he was restless. And so it came that he turned his footsteps toward the village of Mbonga, the black chief, whose people Tarzan had baited remorselessly since that day upon which Kulunga, the chief's son, had slain Kala.

A river winds close beside the village of the black men. Tarzan reached its side a little below the clearing where squat the thatched huts of the negroes. The river life was ever fascinating to the ape-man. He found pleasure in watching the ungainly antics of Duro, the hippopotamus, and keen sport in tormenting the sluggish crocodile, Gimla, as he basked in the sun. Then, too, there were the shes and the balus of the black men of the Gomangani to frighten as they squatted by the river, the shes with their meager washing, the balus with their primitive toys.

This day he came upon a woman and her child farther down stream than usual. The former was searching for a species of shellfish which were to be found in the mud close to the river bank. She was a young black woman of about thirty. Her teeth were filed to sharp points, for her people ate the flesh of man. Her under lip was slit that it might support a rude pendant of copper which she had worn for so many years that the lip had been dragged downward to prodigious lengths, exposing the teeth and gums of her lower jaw. Her nose, too, was slit, and through the slit was a wooden skewer. Metal ornaments dangled from her ears, and upon her forehead and cheeks; upon her chin and the bridge

of her nose were tattoos in colors that were mellowed now by age. She was naked except for a girdle of grasses about her waist. Altogether she was very beautiful in her own estimation and even in the estimation of the men of Mbonga's tribe, though she was of another people—a trophy of war seized in her maidenhood by one of Mbonga's fighting men.

Her child was a boy of ten, lithe, straight and, for a black, handsome. Tarzan uncloset his rope, and shook out the noose. The two before him, all ignorant of the near presence of that terrifying form, continued preoccupied in the search for shellfish, poking about in the mud with short sticks.

Tarzan stepped from the jungle behind them; his noose lay open upon the ground beside him. There was a quick movement of the right arm and the noose rose gracefully into the air, hovered an instant above the head of the unsuspecting youth, then settled. As it encircled his body below the shoulders, Tarzan gave a quick jerk that tightened it about the boy's arms, pinioning them to his sides. A scream of terror broke from the lad's lips, and as his mother turned, affrighted at his cry, she saw him being dragged quickly toward a great white giant who stood just beneath the shade of a nearby tree, scarcely a dozen long paces from her.

With a savage cry of terror and rage, the woman leaped fearlessly toward the ape-man. In her mien Tarzan saw determination and courage which would shrink not even from death itself. She was very hideous and frightful even when her face was in repose; but convulsed by passion, her expression became terrifyingly fiendish. Even the ape-man drew back, but more in recollection than fear—fear he knew not.

Biting and kicking was the black she-balu as Tarzan tacked him beneath his arm and vanished into the branches hanging low above him, just as the infuriated mother dashed forward to seize and do battle with him. And as he melted away into the depth of the jungle with his still struggling prize, he meditated upon the possibilities which might lie in the process of the Gomangani were the hes as formidable as the shes.

Once at a safe distance from the despoiled mother and out of earshot of her screams and moans, Tarzan paused to inspect his prize, now so thoroughly terrorized that he had ceased his struggles and his outcries. The frightened child rolled his eyes fearfully toward his captor, until the whites showed gleaming all about the irises.

"I am Tarzan," said the ape-man, in the vernacular of the anthropoids. "I will not harm you. You are to be Tarzan's balu. Tarzan will protect you. He will feed you. The best in the jungle shall be for Tarzan's balu, for Tarzan is a mighty hunter. None need you fear, not even Numa, the lion, for Tarzan is a mighty fighter. None so great as Tarzan, son of Kala. Do not fear."

Tarzan sighed. His newly acquired balu had much indeed to learn. It was pitiful that a balu of his size and strength should be so backward. He tried to coax Tibo to follow him; but the child dared not, so Tarzan picked him up and carried him upon his back. Tibo no longer scratched or bit. Escape seemed impossible. Even now, were he set upon the ground, the chance was remote, he knew, that he could find his way back to the village of Mbonga, the chief. Even if he could, there were the lions and the leopards and the hyenas, any one of which, as Tibo was well aware, was particularly fond of the meat of little black boys.

And so Tarzan came to the clearing where the tribe fed, dropping among them with his new balu clinging tightly to his shoulders. He was fairly in the midst of them before Tibo spied a single one of the great hairy forms, or before the apes realized that Tarzan was not alone. When they saw the little Gomangani perched upon his back some of them came forward in curiosity with upturned lips and snarling mien.

Tibo could only stare in wide-eyed horror at the approaching apes. He saw their beaming brows, their great fangs, their wicked eyes. He noted their mighty muscles rolling beneath their shaggy hides. Their every attitude and expression was a menace. Tarzan saw this, too. He drew Tibo around in front of him.

"This is Tarzan's Go-bu-malu," he said. "Do not harm him, or Tarzan will kill you." It and he bared his own fangs in the teeth of the nearest ape.

During the week which followed, Tarzan found his time much occupied. His balu was a greater responsibility than he had counted upon. Not for a moment did he dare leave it, since of all the tribe, Teeka alone could have depended upon to refrain from slaying the hapless black had it not been for Tarzan's constant watchfulness. When the ape-man hunted, he must carry Go-bu-balu about with him. It was irksome, and then the little black seemed so stupid and fearful to Tarzan, it was quite helpless against even the lesser of the jungle creatures.

The little black boy from cringing terror at the sight of Tarzan passed by degrees into trustfulness and admiration. Only kindness had he ever received at the hands of the great white devil-god, yet he had seen with what ferocity his kindly captor could deal with others. He had seen him leap upon a certain he-ape which persisted in attempting to seize and



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slay Go-bu-balu. He had seen the strong, white teeth of the ape-man fastened in the neck of his adversary, and the mighty muscles tensed in battle. He had heard the savage, bestial snarls and roars of combat, and he had realized with a shudder that he could not differentiate between those of his guardian and those of the hairy ape.

While Tarzan pondered his problem concerning the future of his balu, Fate was arranging to take the matter out of his hands. Momaya, Tibo's mother, grief-stricken at the loss of her boy, had consulted the tribal witch-doctor, but to no avail. It was known to the blacks that Tarzan did not eat the flesh of man, for he had slain more than one of their number, yet never tasted the flesh of any. Too, the bodies always had been found, sometimes dropping as though from the clouds to alight in the center of the village. As Tibo's body had not been found, Momaya argued that he still lived, but where?

Then it was that there came to her mind a recollection of Bukawai, the uncle, who dwelt in a cave in the hills to the north, and who he set upon the ground, the chance was remote, he knew, that he could find his way back to the village of Mbonga, the chief. Even if he could, there were the lions and the leopards and the hyenas, any one of which, as Tibo was well aware, was particularly fond of the meat of little black boys.

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forth upon so unholy an excursion. The old chief's interest in the matter was due solely to that age-old alliance which exists between church and state. The local witch-doctor, knowing his own medicine better than any other knew it, was jealous of all other pretenders to accomplishments in the black art. He long had heard of the power of Bukawai, and feared lest, should he succeed in recovering Momaya's lost child, much of the tribal patronage and consequent fees would be diverted to the unclean one. As Mbonga received, as chief, a certain proportion of the witch-doctor's fees and could expect nothing from Bukawai, his heart and soul were, quite naturally, wrapped up in the orthodox church.

But if Momaya could view with intrepid heart an excursion into the jungle and a visit to the fear-haunted abode of Bukawai, she was not likely to be deterred by threats of future punishment at the hands of old Mbonga, whom she secretly despised. Yet she appeared to accede to his injunctions, returning to her hut in silence.

She would have preferred starting upon her quest by daylight, but this was now out of the question, since she must carry food and a weapon of some sort—things which she never could pass out of the village with by day without being subjected to curious questioning that surely could come immediately to the ears of Mbonga.

So Momaya bided her time until night, and just before the gates of the village were closed, she slipped through into the darkness and the jungle. She was much frightened, but she set her face resolutely toward the north, and though she paused often to listen, breathlessly, for the huge cats which, here, were her greatest terror, she nevertheless continued her way stanchly for several hours, until a low moan a little to her right and behind her brought her to a sudden stop.

With palpitating heart the woman stood, scarce daring to breathe, and then, very faintly but unmistakably to her keen ears, came the stealthy crunching of twigs and grasses beneath padded feet.

All about Momaya grew the giant trees of the tropical jungle, festooned with hanging vines and mosses. She seized upon the nearest and started to clamber, apelike, to the branches above. As she did so, there was a sudden rush of a great body behind her, a menacing roar that caused the earth to tremble, and something crashed into the very creeps to which she was clinging—but below her.

Momaya drew herself to safety among the leafy branches and thanked the foresight which had prompted her to bring hung from a cord about her neck. She always had known that that ear was good medicine. It had been given her, when a girl by the witch-doctor of her own tribe and was nothing like the poor, weak medicine of Mbonga's witch-doctor.

All night Momaya clung to her perch, for although the lion sought other prey after a short time, she dared not descend into the darkness again, for fear she might encounter him or another of his kind; but at daylight she clambered down and resumed her way.

his balu never ceased to give evidence of terror in the presence of the apes of the tribe, and also that most of the adult apes were a constant menace to Go-bu-balu's life, so that Tarzan dared not leave him alone with them, took to hunting with the little black boy farther and farther from the stamping grounds of the anthropoids.

It was noon of the third day when Momaya came within sight of the cave of Bukawai, the unclean. The old witch-doctor had rigged a framework of interlaced boughs to close the mouth of the cave from predatory beasts. This was now set to one side, and the black cavern beyond yawned mysterious and repellent. Momaya shivered as from a cold wind of the rainy season. No sign of life appeared about the cave, yet Momaya experienced that uncanny sensation as of unseen eyes regarding her malevolently. Again she shuddered. She tried to force her unwilling feet onward toward the cave, when from its depths issued an uncanny sound that was neither brute nor human, a weird sound that was akin to mindless laughter.

With a stifled scream, Momaya turned and fled into the jungle. For a hundred yards she ran before she could control her terror, and then she paused, listening. Was all her labor, were all the terrors and dangers through which she had passed to go for naught? She tried to steel herself to return to the cave, but again fright overcame her.

Saddened, disheartened, she turned slowly upon the back trail toward the village of Mbonga. Her young shoulders now were drooped like those of an old woman who bears a great burden of many years with their accumulated pains and sorrows, and she walked with tired feet and a halting step. The spring of her fear was gone from Momaya.

For another hundred yards she dragged her weary way, her brain half paralyzed from dumb terror and suffering, and then there came to her the memory of a little babe that suckled at her breast, and of a slim boy who romped, laughing, about her, and they were both Tibo—her Tibo!

Her shoulders straightened. She shook her savage head, and she turned about and walked boldly back to the mouth of the cave of Bukawai, the unclean—of Bukawai, the witch-doctor.

Again, from the interior of the cave came the hideous laughter that was not laughter. This time Momaya recognized it for what it was, the strange cry of a hyena. No more did she shudder, but she held her spear ready and called aloud to Bukawai to come out.

Instead of Bukawai came the repulsive head of a hyena. Momaya poked at it with her spear, and the ugly, sullen brute drew back with an angry growl. Again Momaya called Bukawai by name, and this time there came an answer in mumbling tones that were scarce more human than those of the beast.

"Who comes to Bukawai?" queried the voice.

"It is Momaya," replied the woman; "Momaya from the village of Mbonga, the chief."

"What do you want?"

"I want good medicine, better medicine than Mbonga's witch-doctor can make," replied Momaya. "The great, white, jungle god has stolen my Tibo, and I want medicine

to bring him back, or to find where he is hidden that I may go and get him."

"Who is Tibo?" asked Bukawai. Momaya told him.

"Bukawai's medicine is very strong," said the voice. "Five goats and a new sleeping mat are scarce enough in exchange for Bukawai's medicine."

"Two goats are enough," said Momaya, for the spirit of barter is strong in the breasts of the blacks.

The pleasure of haggling over the price was a sufficiently potent lure to draw Bukawai to the mouth of the cave. Momaya was sorry when she saw him that he had not remained within. There are some things too horrible, too hideous, too repulsive for description—Bukawai's face was of these. When Momaya saw him she understood why it was that he was almost inarticulate.

Beside him were the two hyenas, which rumor had said were his only and constant companions. They made an excellent trio—the most repulsive of beasts with the most repulsive of humans.

"Five goats and a new sleeping mat," mumbled Bukawai.

"Two fat goats and a sleeping mat," Momaya raised her bid; but Bukawai was obdurate. He stuck for the five goats and the sleeping mat for a matter of half an hour, while the hyenas sniffed and growled and laughed hideously. Momaya was determined to give all that Bukawai asked if she could do no better, but haggling is second nature to black barterers, and in the end it partly repaid her, for a compromise finally was reached which included three fat goats, a new sleeping mat and a piece of copper wire.

"Come back tonight," said Bukawai, "when the moon is two hours in the sky. Then will I make the strong medicine which shall bring Tibo back to you. Bring with you the three fat goats, the new sleeping mat, and the piece of copper wire the length of a large man's forearm."

"I cannot bring them," said Momaya. "You will have to come after them. When you have restored Tibo to me, you shall have them all at the village of Mbonga."

Bukawai shook his head.

"I will make no medicine," he said, "until I have the goats and the mat and the copper wire."

Momaya pleaded and threatened, but all to no avail. Finally she turned away and started off through the jungle toward the village of Mbonga. How she could get three goats and a sleeping mat out of the village and through the jungle to the cave of Bukawai, she did not know, but that she would do it somehow she was quite positive—she would do it or die. Tibo must be restored to her.

Tarzan coming lazily through the jungle with little Go-bu-balu, caught the scent of Bara, the deer. Tarzan hungered for the flesh of Bara. Naught tickled his palate so greatly; but to stalk Bara with Go-bu-balu at his heels, was out of the question, so he hid the child in the crotch of a tree where the thick foliage screened him from view, and set off swiftly and silently upon the spur of Bara.

Tibo alone was more terrified than Tarzan even among the apes. Real and apparent dangers are less disconcerting than those which we imagine, and only the gods of his people knew how much Tibo imagined.

He had been but a short time in his hiding place when he heard something approaching through the jungle. He crouched closer to the limb upon which lay and prayed that Tarzan would return quickly. His wide eyes searched the jungle in the direction of the moving creature.

What if it was a leopard that had caught his scent! It would be upon him in a minute. Hot tears flooded from the large eyes of little Tibo. The curtain of jungle foliage rustled close at hand. The thing was but a few paces from his tree! His eyes fairly popped from his black face as he watched for the appearance of the dread creature which presently would thrust a snarling countenance from between the vines and creepers.

And then the curtain parted and a woman stepped into full view. With a gasping cry, Tibo tumbled from his perch and raced toward her. Momaya suddenly started back and raised her spear, but a second later she cast it aside and caught the thin body in her strong arms.

Crushing it to her, she cried and laughed all at one and the same time, and hot tears of joy, mingled with the tears of Tibo, trickled down the crease between her naked breasts.

Disturbed by the noise so close at hand, there arose from his sleep in a near-by thicket Numa, the lion. He looked through the tangled underbrush, and saw the black woman and her young. He licked his chops and measured the distance between them and himself. A short charge and a long leap would carry him upon them. He flicked the end of his tail and sighed.

A vagrant breeze, swirling suddenly in the wrong direction, carried the scent of Tarzan to the sensitive nostrils of Bara, the deer. There was a startled tensing of muscles and cocking of ears, a sudden dash, and Tarzan's meat was gone. The ape-man angrily shook his head and turned back toward the spot where he had left Go-bu-balu. He came softly, as was his way. Before he reached the spot he heard strange sounds—the sound of a woman laughing and of a woman weeping, and the two which seemed to come from one throat were mingled with the convulsive sobbing of a child. Tarzan hastened, and when Tarzan hastened, only the birds and the wind went faster.

And as Tarzan approached the sounds, he heard another, a deep sigh. Momaya did not hear it, nor did Tibo; but the ears of Tarzan were as the ears of Bara, the deer. He heard the sigh, and he knew, so he unlocked the heavy spear which dangled at his back. Even as he sped through the branches of the trees, with the same ease that you or I might take out a pocket handkerchief as we strolled nonchalantly down a lazy country lane, Tarzan of the Apes took the spear from its sheath that it might be ready against any emergency.

Numa, the lion, did not rush madly to attack. He reasoned again, and reason told him that already the prey was his, so he pushed his great bulk through the foliage and stood eyeing his meat with baleful, glaring eyes.

Momaya saw him and shrieked, drawing Tibo closer to her breast. To have found his child and to lose him, all in a moment! She raised her spear, throwing her hand far back of her shoulder. Numa roared and stepped slowly forward. Momaya cast her weapon. It grazed the tawny shoulder, inflicting a flesh wound which aroused all the terrific bestiality of the carnivore and the lion charged.

Momaya tried to close her eyes, but could not. She saw the flashing swiftness of the huge, oncoming death, and then she saw something else. She saw a mighty, naked white man drop as from the heavens into the path of the charging lion. She saw the muscles of a great arm flash in the light of the equatorial sun as it filtered, dappling, through the foliage above. She saw a heavy hunting spear hurtle through the air to meet the lion in midleap.

Numa brought up upon his haunches, roaring terribly and striking at the spear which protruded from his breast. His great bows bent and twisted the weapon. Tarzan, crouching and with hunting knife in hand, circled warily about the frenzied cat. Momaya, wide-eyed, stood rooted to the spot, watching, fascinated.

In sudden fury Numa hurled himself toward the ape-man, but the wily creature eluded the blundering charge, sidestepping quickly only to rush in upon his foe. Twice the hunting blade flashed in the air. Twice it fell upon the back of Numa, already weakening from the spear point so near his heart. The second stroke of the blade pierced fair into the beast's spine, and with a last convulsive sweep of the forepaws, in a vain attempt to reach his tormentor, Numa sprawled upon the ground, paralyzed and dying.

Bukawai, fearful lest he should lose any recompense, followed Momaya with the intention of persuading her to part with her ornaments of copper and iron against her return with the price of the medicine—to pay, as it were, for an option on his services as one pays a retaining fee to an attorney, for, like an attorney, Bukawai knew the value of his medicine and that it was well to collect as much as possible in advance.

The witch-doctor came upon the lion's charge. He saw it all and marveled, guessing immediately that this must be the strange white demon concerning whom he had heard vague rumors before Momaya came to him.

Momaya, now that the lion was past harming her or hers, gazed with new terror upon Tarzan. It was he who had stolen her Tibo. Doubtless he would attempt to steal him again. Momaya hugged the boy close to her. She was determined to die this time rather than suffer Tibo to be taken from her again.

Tarzan eyed them in silence. The sight of the boy clinging, sobbing, to his mother aroused within his savage breast a melancholy loneliness. There was none thus to cling to Tarzan, who yearned so for the love of someone, or something.

At last Tibo looked up, because of the quiet that had fallen upon the jungle, and saw Tarzan. He did not shrink.

"Tarzan," he said, in the speech of the great apes of the tribe of Kerchak, "do not take me from Momaya, my mother. Do not take me again to the lair of the hairy, tree men, for I fear Taug and Gunto and the others. Let me stay with Momaya, O Tarzan, God of the Jungle! Let me stay with Momaya, my mother, and to the end of our days we will bless you and put food before the gates of the village of Mbonga that you may never hunger," Tarzan sighed.

"Go," he said, "back to the village of Mbonga, and Tarzan will follow to see that no harm befalls you." Tibo translated the words to his mother, and the two turned their backs upon the ape-man and started off toward home. In the heart of Momaya was a great fear and a great exultation, for never before had she walked with God, and never had she been so happy. She strained little Tibo to her, stroking his thin cheek. Tarzan saw and sighed again.

"For Teeka there is Teeka's balu," he soliloquized; "for Sabor there are balus, and for the she-Gomangani, and for Bara, and for Manu, and even for Pamba, the rat; but for Tarzan there can be none—neither a she nor a balu. Tarzan of the Apes is a man, and it must be that man walks alone."

Bukawai saw them go, and he mumbled through his rotting face, swearing a great oath that he would yet have the three fat goats, the new sleeping mat, and the bit of copper wire.

The next complete "Jungle Tale" will appear Saturday, July 5.